

Holy Sonnet 1

Thou hast made me, and shall thy work decay?
Repair me now, for now mine end doth haste,
I run to death, and death meets me as fast,
And all my pleasures are like yesterday;
I dare not move my dim eyes any way,
Despair behind, and death before doth cast
Such terror, and my feebled flesh doth waste
By sin in it, which it towards hell doth weigh.
Only thou art above, and when towards thee
By thy leave I can look, I rise again;
But our old subtle foe so tempteth me,
That not one hour I can myself sustain;
 Thy grace may wing me to prevent his art,
 And thou like adamant draw mine iron heart.

Holy Sonnet 10

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou are not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou'art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy'or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
 One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
 And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

The Flea

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deniest me is;
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead,
 Yet this enjoys before it woo,
 And pampered swells with one blood made of two,
 And this, alas, is more than we would do.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, nay more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,
And cloistered in these living walls of jet.
 Though use make you apt to kill me,
 Let not to that, self-murder added be,
 And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail, in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou
Find'st not thy self, nor me the weaker now;
 'Tis true; then learn how false, fears be:
 Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,
 Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

Air and Angels

Twice or thrice had I lov'd thee,
Before I knew thy face or name;
So in a voice, so in a shapeless flame
Angels affect us oft, and worshipp'd be;
 Still when, to where thou wert, I came,
Some lovely glorious nothing I did see.
 But since my soul, whose child love is,
Takes limbs of flesh, and else could nothing do,
 More subtle than the parent is
Love must not be, but take a body too;
 And therefore what thou wert, and who,
 I bid Love ask, and now
That it assume thy body, I allow,
And fix itself in thy lip, eye, and brow.

Whilst thus to ballast love I thought,
And so more steadily to have gone,
With wares which would sink admiration,
I saw I had love's pinnace overfraught;
 Ev'ry thy hair for love to work upon
Is much too much, some fitter must be sought;
 For, nor in nothing, nor in things
Extreme, and scatt'ring bright, can love inhere;
 Then, as an angel, face, and wings
Of air, not pure as it, yet pure, doth wear,
 So thy love may be my love's sphere;
 Just such disparity
As is 'twixt air and angels' purity,
'Twixt women's love, and men's, will ever be.

A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning

As virtuous men pass mildly away,
 And whisper to their souls to go,
Whilst some of their sad friends do say
 The breath goes now, and some say, No:

So let us melt, and make no noise,
 No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move;
'Twere profanation of our joys
 To tell the laity our love.

Moving of th' earth brings harms and fears,
 Men reckon what it did, and meant;
But trepidation of the spheres,
 Though greater far, is innocent.

Dull sublunary lovers' love
 (Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
Absence, because it doth remove
 Those things which elemented it.

But we by a love so much refined,
 That our selves know not what it is,
Inter-assured of the mind,
 Care less, eyes, lips, and hands to miss.

Our two souls therefore, which are one,
 Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
 Like gold to airy thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so
 As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show
 To move, but doth, if the other do.

And though it in the center sit,
 Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans and hearkens after it,
 And grows erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
 Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
 And makes me end where I begun.